



City of Renton

Planning Commission
Briefing Session

on

Household Pets, Small Animals, and
Hobby Kennels

September 26, 2007

Docket Work Program

- As part of the docket work program
Development Services requested:
 - A review of household pets
 - Clarification regarding the keeping of small animals such as ducks, geese, chickens, and rabbits
- Additionally, City Council requested:
 - Clarification regarding the keeping of pigeons

Docket Work Program

- As staff researched this work item, we were made aware of other issues:
 - Household pets as an accessory use
 - Small animals
 - Pigeons
 - Hobby Kennels
 - Hobby Husbandry

Household Pets

- Issue
 - Current code places the keeping of household pets in the zoning use table, is this appropriate?
 - Should keeping household pets be permitted outright as an accessory use?

Household Pets

- Analysis
 - Common Household Pets definition –
 - “Dogs, cats, and other similar-sized animals, as determined by the Development Services Director, typically sold in pet stores”
 - Currently, in the zoning use table a maximum of 3 pets per dwelling unit or business establishment are allowed in all zones.

Household Pets

- Analysis
 - Accessory use definition –
 - “Uses customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal use and typically located upon the same lot occupied by the principal use.”
 - Keeping animals of the type that are typically considered household pets does constitute an accessory use, in most situations
 - Not hobby kennels, kennels, pet-sitting, etc.

Household Pets

- Recommendation
 - It is appropriate for household pets to be considered accessory
 - Eliminate household pets from the zoning use table 4-2-060
 - Amend 4-4-010 to allow household pets as an accessory use

Further Issues

- Should the City allow additional pets through a distinction between indoor and outdoor animals?
- Should the city allow additional pets on lots larger than ½ acre?

Small Animals

- Issue

- Current code requires minimum 1 acre to keep small animals.
- Should the regulations regarding small animals be changed?

Small Animals

- Analysis

- There have been requests before Council to keep pigeons and informal knowledge of citizens who have chickens they would like to legally keep.
- The current one acre requirement leaves very few locations in the City where small animals can be kept.

Small Animals

- Analysis
 - Current code allows the keeping of up to 20 small animals on lots that are at least one acre in the RC, R-1, R-4, R-8, and R-10 zones
 - Calculating this standard into smaller lot sizes demonstrates that 1 small animal could be kept on the minimum lot size in R-10

Small Animals

- Analysis

Zone	Min Lot Size	# of Small Animals
R-1	1 acre	20
R-4	8,000	3.67
R-8	4,500	2.07
R-10	3,000	1.38

Small Animals

- Analysis
 - Calculations from 2001 – 2005 Buildable lands summary show average lot sizes of recent construction are larger than the minimum allowable lot size

Small Animals

- Analysis

Zone	Avg Lot Size Plats	Avg Lot Size Permits	# of Sm Animals
R-4	9,673	N/A	4.44
R-8	6,562	6,733	3.01
R-10	5,166	4,712	2.16

Small Animals

- Analysis

- Many other cities allow the keeping of small animals, especially chickens
 - SeaTac – 5 chickens on any lot, other fowl when 15,000 sq ft
 - Seattle – 3 chickens on any lot, 4 on lots larger than 20,000 sq ft
 - Tukwila – 12 chickens and rabbits on lots larger than 10,000 sq ft
 - Kent – 3 domestic fowl in addition to sm. domestic on lots larger than 5,000 sq ft

Small Animals

- Analysis
 - Considering the standards of other cities and calculations of existing City standards, it seems reasonable to allow as an accessory use the keeping of a maximum of 3 small animals on lots larger than 5,000 sq ft.

Small Animals

- Recommendation

- It is appropriate to allow small animals as an accessory use to residential and business establishments.
- Eliminate small animals from the zoning use table 4-2-060
- Amend 4-4-010 to allow 3 small animals on lots larger than 5,000 sq ft and when they can be kept enclosed 10 ft from any property line



Further Issues



- Should the City allow additional small animals for lots over ½ acre?

Pigeons

- Issues

- Current code does not indicate what type of animals pigeons are to be considered (Small or Household)
- Current definition of Small Animals –
 - “Rabbits, chickens, ducks, geese, and other animals of similar size and characteristics.”

Pigeons

- Analysis
 - Current definition of Household Pets –
 - “Dogs, cats, and other similar sized animals, as determined by the Development Services Division Director, typically sold in pet stores.”
 - Should the keeping of pigeons be allowed in residential areas?

Pigeons

- Analysis

- Pigeons are not specifically identified in Renton code definitions, neither as pets or small animals
- Many other cities often do not specifically identify pigeons, but do have regulations allowing fowl

Pigeons

- Analysis

- Some cities have standards similar to King Co
 - Birds kept with standards -
 - .5 cubic foot – canary size
 - 1 cubic foot - pigeon size
 - 2 cubic feet - large parrot size
 - Any accessory structure is at least 10 ft from any property line

Pigeons

- Analysis
 - The current definition for small animals almost entirely identifies fowl as small animals
 - Pigeons are similar type animals with similar traits

Pigeons

- Recommendation

- If keeping small animals is appropriate as an accessory use, then keeping pigeons is also
- Adding pigeons to the definition is appropriate and would allow 3 pigeons on lots larger than 5,000 sq ft.
- *Striking rabbits from this definition makes the household pets definition using “sold in pet stores” clause more clear*

Hobby Kennels

- Issue

- Currently, the allowance of 8 animals can and does translate to the licensed activity of 8 breeding female dogs with their litters at single family households.
- What is a more appropriate maximum number for a Hobby Kennel?

Hobby Kennels

- Analysis

- Many cities permit outright more household pets (4, 5, and 6) depending on lot size, but have no allowance for any number greater.
- King County has “hobby kennel” license, but it does not appear to have a maximum number.
- 6 is the most allowed by the cities examined for this review, and it seems to be a reasonable number to move forward with.

Hobby Kennels

- Recommendation
 - Modify regulations so that households can have a maximum of 6 dogs or cats, subject to Animal Control approval.

Hobby Husbandry

- Issue

- Many people have a desire to keep animals that are typically associated with farms, such as goats, at their suburban homes.
- Should the City allow such use with a “Hobby Husbandry” type permit?

Hobby Husbandry

- Analysis
 - Current City definition of Medium Animals
 - “Goats, sheep, pigs and other animals of similar size and characteristics.”
 - Small breeds of goats are smaller than many standard breeds of dogs.
 - Labrador Retrievers weigh 55 – 80 lbs.
 - Pygmy goats weigh 50 – 60 lbs.

Hobby Husbandry

- Analysis

- Other cities accommodate for the keeping of animals like goats by defining “Small Domesticated Animals” which also includes animals Renton defines as pets (cats and dogs).
- Example definition, City of Kent
 - “*Small Domesticated Animal* – any dog, cat, rabbit, or other animal of similar size and character. Included within this definition is a type of swine commonly known as Vietnamese, Chinese, or Asian Potbelly Pigs”

Hobby Husbandry

- Analysis
 - Example definition, City of SeaTac
 - “*Domestic Animals* – Dogs, cats, birds, snakes, small rodents, rabbits, goats, pygmy goats, pot-bellied pigs, chickens (including roosters), miniature horses not exceeding 40 pounds, and ducks and other fowl, which can be and are continually kept or raised in a home or on a lots”

Hobby Husbandry

- Analysis
 - Then those cities regulate the keeping domesticated animals, not pets or livestock, by lot size.
 - Kent – any 3 domesticated small animals on lots up to 20,000 square feet in size. (Can also keep 3 domesticated fowl)

Hobby Husbandry

- Analysis

- SeaTac – depends on the combination of animals and lot size, but for example on lots less than 7,200 sq ft can have maximum of 5 of the following:

- Cats – 3
- Dogs – 3
- Rabbits – 5
- Goats (Pygmy Goats) – 1
- Sheep – 1
- Pigs/Pot-bellied – 0
- Chickens – 5
- Ducks – 5
- Other fowl – 0
- Miniature Horses – 0

Hobby Husbandry

- Analysis

- The City of Renton could implement a Hobby Husbandry license that could allow the keeping of animals like goats and perhaps chickens, upon inspection by Animal Control
 - To demonstrate that the lot can sufficiently accommodate the animals
 - With waste management, sufficient accessory structure, proximity to other residences, etc.

Hobby Husbandry

- Recommendation
 - Staff would like Planning Commission input on this item before moving forward with a recommendation.

